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1962/10/26

INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

34-31

Action

Control: 18749

Rec'd: OCTOBER 26, 1962
2:02 PM

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Info

FROM: LONDON

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

SS

TO: Secretary of State

REVIEWED BY John DATE 3/31/68

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NO: 1699, OCTOBER 26, 6 PM

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GEORGE BROWN LAST NIGHT GAVE EMBOFFS BACKGROUND TO LABOUR

IO

PARTY EXECUTIVE STATEMENT ON CUBA, RELEASED OCT 24,

P

INCOMPLETELY REPORTED IN WORLD PRESS, AND INTERPRETED

USIA

BY CERTAIN OBSERVERS (DREW MIDDLETON IN NY TIMES, OCT

NSC

25, FOR ONE) AS IMPLYING SOFT LABOR LINE ON AUTHENTICITY

INR

EVIDENCE OF SOVIET MISSILE SITES AND WEAPONS IN CUBA.

CIA

(EMBASSY AIRGRAMMED COPIES OF NEC STATEMENT OCT 26.)

NSA

PHRASES IN DOCUMENT AROUSING DOUBTS ABOUT LABOR POSITION

OSD

WERE "IF LONG-RANGE MISSILES HAVE BEEN SET UP IN CUBA..."

ARMY

AND "THE ALLEGATION THAT LONG-RANGE MISSILES BASES

NAVY

ARE BEING INSTALLED IN CUBA...".

AIR

BROWN SAID HE ASKED GAITSKELL THREE TIMES BEFORE RELEASE TO REMOVE CONDITIONAL LANGUAGE AND OVER-CAUTIOUS ATTRIBUTIONS. GAITSKELL COULD NOT BE PERSUADED TO DO SO, NOT BECAUSE HE IS IN SERIOUS PERSONAL DOUBT ABOUT EVIDENCE (NOR ARE MOST OTHER MEMBERS OF NEC AND PARLIAMENTARY LABOR PARTY FRONT-BENCH), BUT BECAUSE SUCH LANGUAGE WAS, IN HIS OPINION, LOGICALLY TIED TO SUGGESTED EXAMINATION OF EVIDENCE "ON SPOT BY IMPARTIAL COMMISSION SET UP BY UN." THIS RECOMMENDATION IS ALSO PART OF NEC STATEMENT. BROWN, HIMSELF COMPLETELY CONVINCED OF EVIDENCE, REGARDS GAITSKELL'S REASONING AS TYPICAL OF "DONNISH SCRUPLES." BROWN INSISTS US MUST STAND FIRM, NOT GIVE "BLOODY INCH", ABOVE ALL, IN NO CIRCUMSTANCES CONSIDER DICKER WITH USSR ON TURKISH BASES.

IF ON BROWN'S READING GAITSKELL IS ESSENTIALLY SOUND ON POINT OF EVIDENCE, SAME CANNOT BE SAID FOR OTHER MEMBERS

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[REDACTED]

-2- 1699, OCTOBER 26, 6 PM, FROM LONDON

OF PARTY, INCLUDING AT LEAST ONE FAIRLY INFLUENTIAL LABOR LEADER. EMBASSY WAS RELIABLY INFORMED OCT 25 DENIS HEALEY TOLD IMPERIAL DEFENSE COLLEGE AUDIENCE HERE EVIDENCE OF SOVIET MISSILE BASES AND LONG-RANGE WEAPONS WAS "FAKED". HE WAS "RABID" IN DENOUNCING "FOLLY" OF US ACTIONS IN CUBA AND FOUND NOT ONE SINGLE EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCE TO JUSTIFY IT. ACTUALLY HEALEY'S ATTITUDE ON US HANDLING CUBAN SITUATION GOES BACK LONG WAY. HE TOLD EMBOFF MONTHS AGO US WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT FACTS OF LIFE THERE AND LEARN TO LIVE WITH THEM. HE APPEARS TO HAVE LOST CONTROL OF HIMSELF IN JUDGING ELEMENTS IN PRESENT SITUATION. WHILE RESPONSIBLE BRITISH OPINION HAS REACTED COOLY AND, ON WHOLE, UNDERSTANDINGLY TO US COURSE IN CUBA, OTHERS, INCLUDING SMALL MINORITY OF COMMUNISTS, CND SUPPORTERS, PACIFISTS, AND DISTURBED CENTRISTS, HAVE VIOLENTLY DISSENTED.

BRUCE

HLN